



Testimony

Leo Paul

First Selectman, Town of Litchfield
Public Safety & Security Committee
of the Connecticut General Assembly
March 4, 2014

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of HB-5391, which would assist towns in maintaining Resident State Trooper programs.

Costs for the Resident State Program increase significantly each year. A few years ago, the fringe benefit rate for was about 59% and we questioned why it was so high. Now, the rate has increased to 83.85%, and many towns are struggling to find some savings in their budget to offset this shortfall.

The Town of Litchfield values its Resident State Trooper program but we are frustrated by continued increases in the cost of these services. For towns like Litchfield, it doesn't make sense to maintain our own local police department.

The Resident State Trooper program has been a good fit for our community and will continue to be if we can work together to control costs. It provides us with an efficient way of maintaining a strong public safety presence in our town without overburdening property taxpayers.

The program also reduces the burden on the state by ensuring that towns share responsibility for these services. If towns are forced to abandon the Resident State Trooper program, the state is responsible for 100% of the costs associated with providing public safety coverage in these areas.

I urge your support for HB-5391, which will strengthen public safety in our communities.